



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Public Library

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San Diego Public Library to Improve Access to Computers and the Internet for all Residents

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant will support hardware upgrades

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego Public Library has received a \$144,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to upgrade computers previously granted by the foundation. The grant will allow the Library to sustain free, high quality access to computers and the Internet for library patrons.

Millions of Americans rely on library computers to do research for school or work, take distance-learning classes, find health information, communicate with family and friends, and keep up with current events. In communities with lower incomes, libraries often provide the only Internet access.

“Computer and Internet access has become a key service for the Library’s patrons,” said City Library Director Anna Tatár “It is critical that we have the resources necessary to sustain this service so that the Library can help San Diegans access the information they need to live engaged, successful lives.”

The grant is part of the foundation’s U.S. Library Program, which supports the efforts of public libraries to offer free access to computers, the Internet and digital information in communities throughout the United States. In 2000, the foundation provided funding for 96 computers for the San Diego Public Library. Due to technology advances, upgrades to the software and hardware now are required to ensure that all libraries are able to sustain the initial investment in connectivity for their patrons.

“Libraries deserve to have the necessary resources to provide library patrons with efficient technology,” said Martha Choe, director of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s Global Libraries program. “It is now important for libraries to receive continued support from the community – government, businesses, foundations, and citizens – to maintain this technology and provide upgrades in the future.”

Founded in 1882, the San Diego Public Library serves more than 6.5 million each year. It has a total of 720 computers available for public use at its 35 library locations throughout the City.

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